a time-frame of six months for offering a pilot sample only, placing an order on Ordnance Factory, Medak was not considered by the competent authority.

(b) During exploitation of 200 Light Bullet Proof Vehicles procured in July, 2005, some defects were reported, for which a new engine is being trial evaluated. Also, a few minor defects as reported by the Eastern Command in respect of the 9 vehicles procured in February, 2007, are being addressed by the Original Equipment Manufacturer.

(c) and (d) The question of procurement of an item through indigenous or global sources or through manufacturing by the Ordnance Factory Board, keeping in view the technological capability available in the country and the operational urgency, is processed in terms of the Defence Procurement Procedure and other relevant provisions of procurement. Based on the decision taken at the appropriate forum as laid down therein, the Requests for Proposals are issued accordingly.

Inducting of Brahmos

3133. DR. K: MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any progress in inducting Supersonic Brahmos into our regular fighting force;

(b) what is the stage of Russia agreeing to hire out nuclear powered Akula submarine for training purpose; and

(c) in case the above did not materialize, what is the way-out in the process?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) Brahmos Supersonic cruise missile has gone through a series of successive successful flight trials from ship and road mobile launchers with integrated user configuration for Navy and Army. The Brahmos system has been accepted and being produced. The induction process has already commenced for Navy and Army.

(b) and (c) Information can not be divulged in the interest of National Security.

Outsourcing of services/trades in armed forces

3134. SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN:
SHRI MOHAMMED AMIN:

. Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Ministry has approved outsourcing of services/trades in Army, Navy and Air Force due to deficiency in civilian manpower and the adverse effect of the same on the functioning in lower formation;

(b) if so, the reasons thereof; and

(C) the details of such services/trades and manpower employed in such outsourced services?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (c) The issue of deficiency in civilian manpower in the three services and the adverse effect of the same on the functioning in lower formations and outsourcing of services has been examined. It has been clarified to the three Services Headquarters that provisions for outsourcing of Services already exist in

the General Financial Rules, which may be exercised in consultation with Integrated Finance. Outsourcing of services may be examined on case to case basis, and the Services would have to satisfy themselves with regard to the security concerns. However, actual outsourcing due to deficiency of civilian manpower has not yet been resorted to by the Army, Navy and Air Force.

Appeals to trace PoW

3135. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are many appeals to trace PoW including a flag officer from Malappuram district of Kerala who had gone missing during the 1971 Indo-Pakistan war;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the number of soldiers who are in Pakistan jails;

(c) the steps taken to trace the soldiers who had been missing during the 1971 war; and

(d) whether any steps had been taken to trace the above Kerala PoW after the report appeared in the various newspapers that he is interned in Pakistan jail?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (d) The relatives of missing Defence personnel including that of Flying Officer from Malappuram, Kerala of 1971 Indo-Pak War have been approaching the Government from time to time to trace their relatives.

About 54 missing defence personnel of 1971 War are believed to be in the custody of Pakistan. The Government of Pakistan has, however, been consistently denying the presence of any such personnel in its custody. The Government of India have been pursuing this issue with Pakistan for a long time and is deeply concerned about it.

This issue was taken up with the Pakistan Government at various levels on a number of occasions. Most recently, during the visit of External Affairs Minister, to Islamabad in January, 2007, the matter was raised with the President of Pakistan and the latter in turn agreed to a visit by a small group of relatives to Pakistan.

Accordingly, a delegation of 14 relatives of missing defence personnel visited 10 Jails in different parts of Pakisan from 1st June, 2007 to 14th June, 2007. But they could not find any missing defence personnel of 1971 War.

The Government will continue to take up the issue of missing defence personnel with the Government of Pakistan as it has been doing in the past.

Dialogue on Defence Cooperation with Malaysia

t3136. MS. SUSHILA TIRIYA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been some dialogue between India and Malaysia in connection with enhancing cooperation in the field of defence;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the progress made in this regard so far?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (c) Malaysia-India Defence Cooperation Committee (MIDCOM) has been established under the provisions of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed with Malaysia in 1993.

†Onginal notice of the question was received in Hindi.